



COPS *Fact Sheet*

COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

www.cops.usdoj.gov

Universal Hiring Program Adding Officers to the Street

*GRANTS HAVE HELPED CHANGE THE
WAY AMERICA POLICES — FROM
OFFICERS RUSHING FROM INCIDENT
TO INCIDENT TO OFFICERS AND
RESIDENTS WORKING TOGETHER TO
PREVENT AND STOP CRIME AND
VIOLENCE.*

The Universal Hiring Program (UHP) is one of several approaches developed by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to increase the number of officers on the beat.

A decade ago as crime was soaring, law enforcement officers were rushing from incident to incident. Today, eight years after the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 was signed into law, officers are walking the beat again. Citizens now know the officers policing their neighborhoods. Officers and citizens are partnering to develop creative and innovative ways to deal with long-standing problems.

Supporting Local Law Enforcement

The COPS Office has awarded hiring grants through several programs over the course of its history. COPS formed the Universal Hiring Program in 1995 to supersede early programs such as Phase I; Accelerated Hiring, Education, and Deployment (AHEAD); and Funding Accelerated for Smaller Towns (FAST). UHP enables interested agencies to supplement their current sworn forces, or interested jurisdictions to establish a new agency, through three-year federal grants. To date, COPS has invested more than \$4.9 billion to hire over 66,000 law enforcement professionals through UHP and the hiring programs it superseded.

Funding Provisions

UHP grants cover up to 75 percent of the approved entry-level salary and benefits of each newly hired additional officer position over three years. There is a maximum federal contribution of \$75,000 per officer or deputy position over the three-year grant period. A minimum 25 percent local match is required.

The match must be a cash match from funds not previously budgeted for any law enforcement purpose. Funding is for the new officers that have been hired on or after the date of the award, and will be paid over the course of the grant.

Waivers of the local matching requirement may be requested under UHP, but will be granted only upon a showing of extraordinary fiscal hardship.

COPS grant funds must not be used to replace local funds that agencies otherwise would have devoted to sworn officer hiring. The hiring of officers under UHP must be in addition to, and not in lieu of, officers that otherwise would have been hired with local funds. All grant recipients must develop a written plan to retain any COPS-funded officer positions awarded for at least one full local budget cycle after federal funding has ended. This plan must be clearly specified in the *Retention Plan Certification* form that all applicants are required to submit at the time of their application.

Funding in Fiscal Year 2002

The COPS Office awarded more than \$175 million to hire almost 2,500 law enforcement professionals through the Universal Hiring Program during 2002. Applications were accepted in late spring through June 21, 2002, and grants were awarded through August 2002.

Contact COPS

For more information, call the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1.800.421.6770, or visit the COPS Office web site at www.cops.usdoj.gov.